



CONNECTED BY LOVE

The Sixth Sunday of Easter

GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH | Seward, NE

May 9, 2021

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

We are pleased that you have chosen to worship the Lord with us today. Large print hymnals and personal assisted listening devices are available on request. The service can be heard throughout the building so that you can participate even if you have to take your child out for a while. Restrooms are in the hall between the chapel and fellowship area. If you have any questions please feel free to ask an usher.

CONNECTION CARDS: Visitors or members with changes in contact information, please fill out a connection card online at www.gracesewar.org the member connect tab, or scan this code.



SERVICE NOTES FOR THIS SUNDAY

Communion

We are celebrating the Lord's Supper today. Scripture tells us that we need to examine ourselves before we receive the Lord's Supper so that we do not take it in a harmful manner. (1 Cor. 11:27-29) For help in preparation see page 156 in the front of the hymnal.

Visitors: Because we do not want you to receive the Lord's Supper in a harmful manner we ask that you do not come forward for the Lord's Supper today if you are not members of a WELS or ELS church. The pastor will be happy to share with you the Biblical basis for this practice.

SERVING IN WORSHIP

Worship Leader

Pastor Mark A. Haefner

Organist

Mr. Quinton Corwin

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DIVINE SERVICE II

Divine Service II is a version of the historic liturgy of the Christian church.

OPENING HYMN

The Love of Christ, Who Died for Me | 749

1 The love of Christ, who died for me Is more than mind can know,
His mercy measureless and free To meet the debt I owe.
He came my sinful cause to plead, He laid his glories by,
For me a homeless life to lead, A shameful death to die.

2 My sins I only see in part, My self-regarding ways;
The secret places of my heart Lie bare before his gaze.
For me the price of sin he paid; My sins beyond recall
Are all alike on Jesus laid, he died to bear them all.

3 O living Lord of life, for whom The heavens held their breath,
To see, triumphant from the tomb, A love that conquers death,
Possess my heart that it may be Your kingdom without end,
O Christ who died for love of me And lives to be my friend.

This hymn examines the true nature of God's grace. While human love is directed toward people and things that bring pleasure, "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

INVOCATION

please stand, if able

M In the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

CONFESSION

M Dear friends, let us approach God with a true heart and confess our sins, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.

C **Lord of life, I confess that I am by nature dead in sin. For faithless worrying and selfish pride, For sins of habit and sins of choice, For the evil I have done and the**

good I have failed to do, You should cast me away from your presence forever. O Lord, I am sorry for my sins. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake.

ABSOLUTION¹

M Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. In his great mercy, God made us alive in Christ even when we were dead in our sins. Hear the word of Christ through his called servant: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son (+) and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

LORD, HAVE MERCY²

M In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

For the well-being of all people everywhere, that they may receive from you all they need to sustain body and life, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

M For the spread of your life-giving gospel throughout the world, that all who are lost in sin may be brought to faith in you, hear our prayer, O Christ.

C **Christ, have mercy.**

M For patience and perseverance in this life, that we may not lose the hope of heaven as we await your return, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

M Lord of life, live in us that we may live for you.

C **Amen.**

¹ *The use of the keys is that special power and right which Christ gave to his church on earth: to forgive the sins of penitent sinners* [The Small Catechism, First: What is the use of the keys?]. See John 20:21-23.

² *Kyrie is the Greek word for Lord. The expression "Lord, have mercy" is one of the oldest worship responses in the Christian church.*

All glory be to God on high!
 Your name, O Lord, we glorify;
 We praise you for your peace and grace,
 Your favor toward our fallen race.

Our grateful thanks to you we bring,
 For your great glory, heav'nly King,
 For all, O Father, you have done
 Through Jesus Christ, your only Son.

O Lamb of God, to you we pray.
 You take all human sin away.
 Have mercy, Lord; receive our prayer;
 From God's right hand, your mercy share.

You, Christ, are holy—Lord alone;
 The Father's glory you made known.
 We by your Spirit sing again:
 "All glory be to God!" Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

M Let us pray.

Father of lights, every good and perfect gift comes from you. Inspire us to think those things that are true and long for those things that are good, that we may always make our petitions according to your gracious will; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

³ Christians praise God by proclaiming the great things he has done to accomplish our rescue from sin. "Glory to God in the Highest" has been a Christian song of worship since the fourth century. (Lk 2:14)

The Word

FIRST LESSON

Acts 9:36-42

³⁶In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was always doing good deeds and acts of charity. ³⁷At that time she became sick and died. After they had washed her, they laid her in an upstairs room. ³⁸Since Lydda is near Joppa, when the disciples heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, who urged him, "Come to us without delay!"

³⁹Peter got up and went with them. When he arrived, they led him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing him the robes and clothing that Dorcas made while she was still with them.

⁴⁰After Peter sent them all outside, he got down on his knees and prayed. Then he turned toward the body and said, "Tabitha, get up!" She opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹He gave her his hand and helped her stand up. After he called the saints and the widows, he presented her to them alive.

⁴²This became known all over Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. ⁴³Peter stayed in Joppa for many days with a man named Simon the tanner. (EHV)

M The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

SECOND LESSON

1 John 4:1-11

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see if they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. ²This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit who confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³and every spirit who does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard is coming and is already in the world. ⁴You are from God, dear children, and you have overcome the false prophets, because the one in you is greater than the one in the world. ⁵They are from the world. That is why they speak from a worldly perspective and the world listens to them. ⁶We are from God. The one who knows God listens to us, but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. That is how we can distinguish between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

⁷Dear friends, let us love one another, because love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸The one who does not love has not known God, because God is love. ⁹This is how God's love for us was revealed: God has sent his only-begotten Son into the world so that we may live through him. ¹⁰This is love: not

that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Dear friends, if God loved us so much, we also should love one another. (EHV)

M The Word of the Lord

C **Thanks be to God!**

VERSE OF THE DAY

Alleluia. Alleluia. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia. If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Alleluia.

HYMN

CW 498

**Come, Spirit, come; our hearts control.
Our spirits long to be made whole.
Let inward love guide ev'ry deed;
By this we worship and are freed.**

GOSPEL⁴

John 15:9-17

please stand, if able

M The Gospel according to John chapter 15.

C **Glory be to you, O Lord.**

⁹"As the Father has loved me, so also I have loved you. Remain in my love. ¹⁰If you hold on to my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have held on to my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you these things so that my joy would continue to be in you and that your joy would be complete.

¹²"This is my command: Love one another as I have loved you. ¹³No one has greater love than this: that someone lays down his life for his friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you continue to do the things I instruct you. ¹⁵I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends, because

⁴ *The congregation stands and speaks words of acclamation out of respect for the words of Christ, our King.*

everything that I heard from my Father, I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will endure, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. ¹⁷These things I am instructing you, so that you love one another. (EHV)

M This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise be to you, O Christ.**

HYMN OF THE DAY

O God of Mercy, God of Might | **499**

1 O God of mercy, God of might, In love and mercy infinite,
Teach us, as ever in your sight, To live our lives to you.

2 You sent your Son for all to die That fallen man might live thereby.
Oh, hear us, for to you we cry In hope, O Lord, to you.

3 Teach us the lesson Jesus taught: To feel for those his blood has bought,
That ev'ry deed and word and thought May work a work for you.

4 All are redeemed, both far and wide, Since Jesus Christ for all has died;
Grant us the will, and grace provide, To love them all in you.

5 In sickness, sorrow, want, or care May we each other's burdens share;
May we, where help is needed, there Give help as though to you.

6 And may your Holy Spirit move All those who live to live in love
Till you receive in heav'n above All those who lived for you.

SERMON

please stand, if able.

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,

eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father.

Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,
and became fully human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

be seated

OFFERING: *WE PRESENT OUR OFFERINGS TO THE LORD*

*On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money
in keeping with his income. 1 Corinthians 16:2 (NIV)*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M O Lord God, our strength, our song, and our salvation, you fulfilled your promises by the resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, from the dead.

C **Thanks be to God! You give us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

M In your compassion you sent Christ, the Good Shepherd, who laid down his life to rescue the lost.

C **Drive out all doubt and gloom that we may delight in your glorious triumph.**

M Lift our eyes heavenward to see him who lives to make intercession for the saints, and grant us confidence in the greatness of his power. Keep before us the vision of your redeemed people standing before your throne and singing the song of victory.

C **Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive wisdom and power and honor and glory and praise.**

M Make us instruments of your peace as we bring the good news of hope and new life to those around us. Guide us in the use of all that you have entrusted to us: our time, our talents, and our treasures.

C **Risen Lord, live in us that we may live for you.**

M Merciful Lord Jesus, grant healing to the sick, and strengthen the faith of the suffering and the dying. Assure them of your abiding presence, and comfort them with the hope of eternal life.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

M Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer.

M Gracious Father, you have restored to us the joy of your salvation. With happy hearts, we come before you and say:

C **Alleluia! Thanks be to God! Amen.**

The Sacrament

Those who have prepared themselves and who have declared their fellowship with us through membership in this or another WELS or ELS congregation are invited to receive the Lord's Supper.

M The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

M Lift up your hearts.

C **We lift them up to the Lord.**

M Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C **It is good and right so to do.**

M It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord: who rose from the dead in glorious triumph to bring forgiveness to the world and everlasting life to all who believe. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9

Tune | 275

**O holy, holy, holy
Lord God of pow'r and might,
Your glory, earth and heaven
In countless ways recite.
Hosanna! Come and save us,
Lord God of hosts on high,
And in your grace and mercy
Receive our fervent cry.**

**Hosanna in the highest!
How truly blest is he
Who in God's name is coming
To set his people free!
He comes to bring salvation
And with his blood outpoured,
Deliver us from bondage—
Hosanna, mighty Lord!**

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Jesus took bread and gave thanks [Matthew 26:26]

Blessed are you, O God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. By his victory over the grave, our Savior declared death's reign ended, the door to heaven open, and the payment for sin complete.

We celebrate with joy the glorious resurrection of your Son.

We marvel at the depth of your love.

We stand in awe of your power.

We are humbled by the compassion you have shown our fallen race.

Lead us to rejoice in the pardon offered and sealed in this Sacrament and to live a life worthy of your name. The Lord Jesus lives! Alleluia.

C Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

**C Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Matthew 26:26-28, 1 Corinthians 11:24,25

M Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take and eat. This is my ✝ body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it all of you; this is my ✝ blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

LAMB OF GOD *John 1:29*

Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.
Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God,
you take a - way the sin of the world;
grant us your peace. A - men.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice | 377

1 Dear Christians, one and all, rejoice, With exultation springing,
And, with united heart and voice And holy rapture singing,
Proclaim the wonders God has done, How his right arm the vict'ry won.
How dearly it has cost him!

2 Fast bound in Satan's chains I lay; Death brooded darkly o'er me.
Sin was my torment night and day; In sin my mother bore me.
Yet deep and deeper still I fell; Life had become a living hell,
So firmly sin possessed me.

3 My own good works availed me naught, No merit they attaining;
My will against God's judgment fought, No hope for me remaining.
My fears increased till sheer despair Left naught but death to be my share
And hell to be my sentence.

4 But God beheld my wretched state Before the world's foundation,
And, mindful of his mercies great, He planned my soul's salvation.
A Father's heart he turned to me, Sought my redemption fervently;
He gave his dearest treasure.

5 He spoke to his beloved Son: "Tis time to have compassion.
Then go, bright Jewel of my crown, And bring mankind salvation.
From sin and sorrow set them free; Slay bitter death for them that they
May live with you forever."

6 The Son obeyed his Father's will, Was born of virgin mother,
And, God's good pleasure to fulfill, He came to be my brother.
No garb of pomp or pow'r he wore; A servant's form like mine he bore
To lead the devil captive.

7 To me he spoke, "Hold fast to me—I am your rock and castle.
Your ransom I myself will be; For you I strive and wrestle.
For I am yours, your friend divine, And evermore you shall be mine;
The foe shall not divide us.

8 "The foe shall shed my precious blood, Me of my life bereaving.
All this I suffer for your good; Be steadfast and believing.
Life shall from death the vict'ry win; My innocence shall bear your sin,
And you are blest forever.

9 "Now to my Father I depart, The Holy Spirit sending
And, heav'nly wisdom to impart, My help to you extending.
He will a source of comfort be, Teach you to know and follow me,
And in all truth will guide you.

10 "What I on earth have lived and taught Be all your life and teaching;
So shall my kingdom's work be wrought And honored in your preaching.
Take care that no one's man-made laws Should e'er destroy the gospel's cause.
This final word I leave you."

please stand

**O Lord, now let your servant
Depart in peace, assured:
For I have seen your promised
incarnate, saving Word—
A Light that will enlighten
All gloom where Gentiles dwell;
The brilliant, crowning glory
Of those in Israel!**

**All glory to the Father,
All glory to the Son,
All glory to the Spirit,
Forever three in one;
For as in the beginning,
Is now, shall ever be,
God's triune name resounding
Through all eternity.**

M We give you thanks, O Lord, for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet that you have given us to eat and to drink in this sacrament. Through this gift you have fed our faith, nourished our hope, and strengthened our love. By your Spirit help us to live as your holy people until that day when you will receive us as your guests at the wedding supper of the Lamb, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

BLESSING

M The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and ✝ give you peace.

C **Amen.**

HYMN

O Master of the Loving Heart | **491**

1 O Master of the loving heart, The friend of all in need,
We pray that we may be like you In thought and word and deed.

2 Your days were full of kindly acts; Your speech was true and plain;
Of those who ever sought you, Lord, None came to you in vain.

3 Your face was warm with sympathy; Your hand God's strength revealed;
Who saw your face or felt your touch Were comforted and healed.

4 Oh, grant us hearts like yours, dear Lord, So joyous, free, and true,
That all your children, ev'rywhere, Be drawn by us to you.

